NEHA Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarian (REHS/RS) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- **Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,**
- **Improve accuracy and speed,**
- **Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and**
- **Approach the exam with greater confidence.**

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here’s how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don’t just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There’s no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. What is the term for the killing of an infectious agent outside the body by chemical or physical means?

A. Detoxification

B. Deodorization

C. Destabilization

D. Disinfection

2. Which of the following statements about noise is false?

A. Noise can affect one's perception of time

B. Noise can increase the variability of work performance

C. Noise affects the quantity of work done

D. Noise makes it more difficult to remain alert

3. What is the leading environmental health problem affecting children in America?

A. Exposure to asbestos

B. Lead poisoning

C. Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke

D. Possible exposure to nuclear wastes

4. Which of the following statements is true regarding bats?

A. Bats serve no purpose in the ecosystem.

B. Bats keep down the number of insects.

C. Bats primarily eat fruit.

D. Bats are harmful to crops.

5. Which of the following is a symptom of pesticide exposure?

A. Headache

B. Allergic reaction

C. Nausea

D. All of the above

6. What is an indication of a septic tank in need of cleaning?

A. Clear effluent with no solid particles

B. Sludge and scum accumulation

C. Odor-free operation

D. Consistent flow rate

7. Which of the following is not commonly associated with the term frequency?

A. waves

B. particles

C. vibrations

D. oscillations

8. In children, blood lead levels (BLLs) more than ____ are associated with decreased intellectual performance and other adverse health events.

A. 2 ppm

B. 5 AO

C. 10 ug/dL

D. 15 ppm

9. What is the smallest diameter hole through which an average house mouse can pass?

A. 1/4 inch

B. 1/2 inch

C. 3/4 inch

D. 1 inch

10. Which one of the following is not a natural source of radiation exposure?

A. Radioactive minerals

B. Cosmic radiation

C. Nuclear power plants

D. Plants

Answers

1. D
2. C
3. B
4. B
5. D
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. C

Explanations

1. What is the term for the killing of an infectious agent outside the body by chemical or physical means?

A. Detoxification

B. Deodorization

C. Destabilization

D. Disinfection

Disinfection refers to the process of killing or inactivating infectious agents outside the body using chemical or physical methods. This can include the use of disinfectants, which are chemicals specifically designed to eliminate pathogens on surfaces or in liquids, or physical methods such as heat or ultraviolet light. The primary goal of disinfection is to reduce the number of viable microorganisms to a level that is not harmful, especially in settings such as healthcare facilities, food preparation areas, and public spaces. In contrast, detoxification typically refers to the process of removing or neutralizing toxins, and deodorization is aimed at eliminating unpleasant odors rather than infectious agents. Destabilization is not a recognized term relevant to the killing of infectious agents and does not capture the essence of the disinfection process. Thus, disinfection is the term that accurately describes the removal or destruction of infectious agents outside the body.

2. Which of the following statements about noise is false?

A. Noise can affect one's perception of time

B. Noise can increase the variability of work performance

C. Noise affects the quantity of work done

D. Noise makes it more difficult to remain alert

The statement concerning the quantity of work done is considered false in the context of how noise affects performance. While it is true that noise can have detrimental effects on focus and concentration, thereby impacting the perceived quality of work, the relationship between noise and the actual quantity of work produced is not as straightforward. In some circumstances, individuals might still manage to complete tasks even in noisy environments, though they may do so with reduced efficiency. The other statements accurately capture recognized effects of noise on human performance. For instance, noise can distort an individual's perception of time, leading to difficulties in managing time effectively during tasks. Additionally, noise raises the variability of work performance; fluctuations in focus and productivity can occur, leading to inconsistent results. Furthermore, noise can hinder alertness, making it harder for individuals to stay attentive, which ultimately affects their overall engagement and efficiency in completing tasks.

3. What is the leading environmental health problem affecting children in America?

A. Exposure to asbestos

B. Lead poisoning

C. Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke

D. Possible exposure to nuclear wastes

The leading environmental health problem affecting children in America is lead poisoning. This is primarily due to lead-based paints and lead-contaminated dust found in older homes, which are particularly hazardous to young children who often explore their environments by crawling and putting objects in their mouths. The effects of lead exposure can be severe and long-lasting, impacting cognitive development and leading to behavioral issues, reduced IQ, and other health complications. Lead poisoning has garnered significant attention from public health officials and organizations, leading to various legislative and community initiatives aimed at reducing exposure, such as inspections and remediation of older housing and education campaigns about the risks of lead. While other options, such as exposure to asbestos, environmental tobacco smoke, and nuclear waste, are indeed serious environmental health issues, they do not impact children as prevalently or as critically as lead poisoning does. For instance, asbestos-related diseases typically manifest after long-term exposure, and while environmental tobacco smoke poses risks, lead exposure has a more direct and immediate impact on a larger group of vulnerable children. Thus, recognizing lead poisoning as the foremost environmental health concern reflects its significant prevalence and the urgent need for intervention.

4. Which of the following statements is true regarding bats?

A. Bats serve no purpose in the ecosystem.

B. Bats keep down the number of insects.

C. Bats primarily eat fruit.

D. Bats are harmful to crops.

Bats play a crucial role in the ecosystem, particularly as natural pest controllers. They are known to consume a significant number of insects, including agricultural pests and other insects that can impact human health. By keeping the population of these insects in check, bats contribute to the balance of local ecosystems and can help reduce the need for chemical pest control methods, which can have harmful environmental effects. The statement about bats serving no purpose in the ecosystem is incorrect, as their role in insect population management is vital. Although some bats do eat fruit, it is not accurate to describe bats primarily as fruit eaters since many species are insectivorous. Lastly, while some bats can occasionally be seen near crops, they are generally beneficial rather than harmful; they help protect crops by reducing the number of insects that may damage them. Thus, the statement about bats keeping down the number of insects accurately captures their significant ecological contribution.

5. Which of the following is a symptom of pesticide exposure?

A. Headache

B. Allergic reaction

C. Nausea

D. All of the above

Pesticide exposure can lead to a variety of symptoms due to the toxic nature of these chemicals. Headaches, allergic reactions, and nausea are all recognized symptoms associated with pesticide exposure. Headaches may result from chemical irritation of the nervous system or from the body reacting to the toxic substances. Allergic reactions could include symptoms such as rashes or respiratory difficulties, which occur when the body's immune system responds abnormally to the chemical compounds in pesticides. Nausea is a common gastrointestinal response to toxins, reflecting how the body reacts to harmful substances and attempts to expel them. By identifying that all these symptoms can arise from pesticide exposure—each involving different body systems—the answer encompasses the full range of reactions one might experience upon exposure to pesticides. Understanding this breadth of symptoms is essential for recognizing potential pesticide poisoning and initiating appropriate responses.

6. What is an indication of a septic tank in need of cleaning?

A. Clear effluent with no solid particles

B. Sludge and scum accumulation

C. Odor-free operation

D. Consistent flow rate

An indication of a septic tank in need of cleaning is sludge and scum accumulation. Over time, solids settle to the bottom of the tank, forming sludge, while fats, oils, and grease rise to the top, creating scum. When the levels of sludge and scum become too high, they can reduce the tank's capacity to effectively treat wastewater. This accumulation can lead to system failure and other issues such as backups or leaks. Regular maintenance, including pumping out the tank to remove these accumulations, is essential to ensure that the septic system functions properly and to prevent environmental contamination. The other options describe conditions that suggest a septic tank is functioning well. Clear effluent with no solid particles indicates effective processing of wastewater, while odor-free operation and a consistent flow rate suggest that the system is functioning normally without blockages or backflow issues.

7. Which of the following is not commonly associated with the term frequency?

A. waves

B. particles

C. vibrations

D. oscillations

The term "frequency" primarily relates to how often an event occurs within a specific period of time. It is most commonly associated with waves, vibrations, and oscillations because these phenomena involve repeating cycles or patterns, which can be quantified by their frequency. In the context of waves, such as sound or electromagnetic waves, frequency describes how many cycles pass a point in a given time frame, typically measured in Hertz (Hz). Similarly, vibrations of an object, like a tuning fork or a string, can also be characterized by their frequency, indicating how many times the object vibrates in a second. Oscillations, like those of a pendulum or springs, likewise have a frequency that measures their repetitive motion over time. Particles, on the other hand, are discrete entities that do not inherently possess a frequency on their own. While the behavior of particles can exhibit wave-like properties (as described by quantum mechanics), the concept of frequency is not directly applied to particles in the same way it is to waves, vibrations, or oscillations. Therefore, particles are not commonly associated with the term frequency as the other choices are.

8. In children, blood lead levels (BLLs) more than ____ are associated with decreased intellectual performance and other adverse health events.

A. 2 ppm

B. 5 AO

C. 10 ug/dL

D. 15 ppm

The association between blood lead levels (BLLs) and adverse health effects in children is well established in public health research. A BLL greater than 10 micrograms per deciliter (ug/dL) has been identified as a threshold for concern, correlating with decreased intellectual performance and various other health issues. This threshold is significant because it reflects the level at which lead exposure has been shown to cause neurodevelopmental harm in children, including cognitive deficits, attention problems, and behavioral issues. Public health guidelines, such as those from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have emphasized the risks associated with elevated lead levels and have set preventative measures to reduce exposure in environments where children live and play. Understanding the impact of lead on children's health is critical for environmental health specialists in their efforts to prevent lead poisoning, especially in areas known for potential lead exposure sources such as old paint, plumbing, or contaminated soil. The other options do not align with established public health guidelines. For instance, lower thresholds like 2 ppm or 5 AO are not recognized as significant concerning adverse health effects in children, and 15 ppm is excessively high based on current medical understanding of lead toxicity.

9. What is the smallest diameter hole through which an average house mouse can pass?

A. 1/4 inch

B. 1/2 inch

C. 3/4 inch

D. 1 inch

The smallest diameter hole through which an average house mouse can pass is approximately 1/4 inch. Mice are incredibly agile and can compress their bodies to fit through openings that may seem surprisingly small. Their skeletal structure allows them to squeeze through tight spaces, making them particularly adept at accessing food sources and shelter in homes and buildings. It is important for homeowners and pest control professionals to be aware of these measurements for effective pest management and prevention. Proper sealing of entry points, such as using materials like steel wool or caulk, can help prevent mice from infiltrating a space. Understanding the dimensions allows for better preparation and strategies to manage rodent infestations, ultimately contributing to maintaining a hygienic environment.

10. Which one of the following is not a natural source of radiation exposure?

A. Radioactive minerals

B. Cosmic radiation

C. Nuclear power plants

D. Plants

The correct response identifies nuclear power plants as not being a natural source of radiation exposure. Natural sources of radiation primarily come from the environment and include elements that occur naturally in the earth, the atmosphere, and living organisms. Radioactive minerals are indeed a natural source as they are found in the earth's crust and emit radiation due to the decay of unstable isotopes. Cosmic radiation refers to high-energy particles that originate from outer space and interact with the Earth's atmosphere, making it another natural source of radiation exposure. Plants can also contribute to radiation exposure through the uptake of radioactive isotopes from the soil, making them a natural source as well. In contrast, nuclear power plants are man-made facilities that generate electricity through nuclear reactions, specifically the fission of uranium or other radioactive materials. The radiation associated with nuclear power plants is a result of human activity and technological processes rather than a natural occurrence. Therefore, recognizing nuclear power plants as a non-natural source of radiation exposure is essential for understanding different radiation sources and their origins.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://neharehsrs.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!